## REMARKS

Applicants concurrently file herewith an executed copy of the Declaration Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.132 (submitted on December 7, 2006) a Request for Continued Examination (RCE), a Petition for Extension of Time, and corresponding RCE and extension of time fees.

Furthermore, Applicants submit herewith an attachment (two (2) pages) including Graph 1 and Graph 2.

Claims 1, 3-8, 10-15, and 17-25 are all of the claims presently pending in the application. Claims 1, 3-5, 8, 10-12, 15 and 17 have merely been editorially amended.

It is noted that the claim amendments are made only for more particularly pointing out the invention, and not for distinguishing the invention over the prior art, narrowing the claims or for any statutory requirements of patentability. Further, Applicants specifically state that no amendment to any claim herein should be construed as a disclaimer of any interest in or right to an equivalent of any element or feature of the amended claim.

In order to clearly verify the evidence that unexpected and important results are by obtained by restricting a ratio (d/D) to the claimed range of $0.5<d/D,0.9$, Applicants submit two graphs (Graph 1 and Graph 2) regarding test results submitted in Declarations under 37 C.F.R. § 1.132. Graph 1 is a line graph with ratio (d/D) on the horizontal axis and eccentricity error on the vertical axis, while Graph 2 is a bar graph with ratio (d/D) on the horizontal axis and number of test pieces of which a surface was damaged on the vertical axis (Graph 1 graphically illustrates the data included in Declaration under 37

C.F.R. § 1.132 submitted on December 7, 2006; Graph 2 graphically illustrates the data included in the Declaration under 37 C.F.R. § 1.132 submitted on July 19, 2006).

As clearly illustrated in Graph 1, in the case that d/D exceeds 0.5, the eccentricity error is significantly decreased. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the claimed range (0.5<d/D) obtains unexpected and important results.

Furthermore, as shown in Graph 2, in the case that d/D exceeds 0.9, the number of test pieces (glass base material) of which a surface is damaged is increased. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the claimed range (d/D<0.9) obtains unexpected and important results.

Moreover, Applicants submit that Ishikawa discloses a synthetic silica glass manufacturing method. A feature of the method is to manufacture a synthetic silica glass in a furnace under a heat treatment of an atmosphere including an inert gas and silicon tetrachloride ($SiCl_4$) gas. Thus, the synthetic silica gas containing neither moisture nor impurities can be manufactured. Specifically, Ishikawa fails to teach or suggest a ratio of (d/D) and (d/L), together with an eccentricity error of the core as recited in the claimed invention and as evidenced in the Declarations submitted under 37 C.F.R. 1.132.

Accordingly, even assuming that Ishikawa may disclose a synthetic silica glass manufacturing method that is somewhat similar to a method for sintering a porous glass material of the claimed invention, Applicants submit that the claimed ranges of the claimed invention would not have been obvious in view of Ishikawa.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that claims 1, 3-8, 10-15 and 17-25, all of the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the

prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

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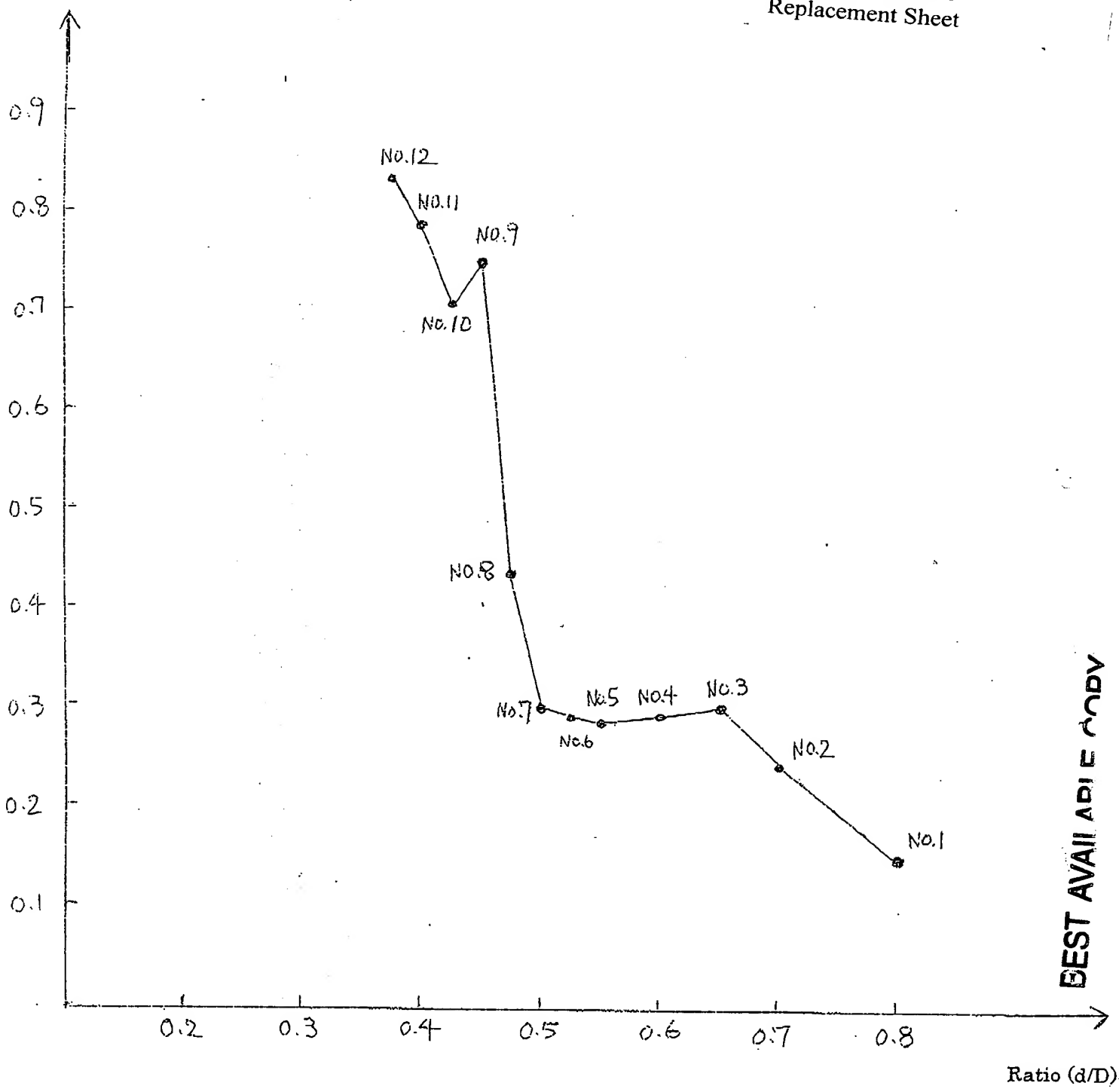
Scott M. Tulino, Esq.
Reg. No. 48, 317

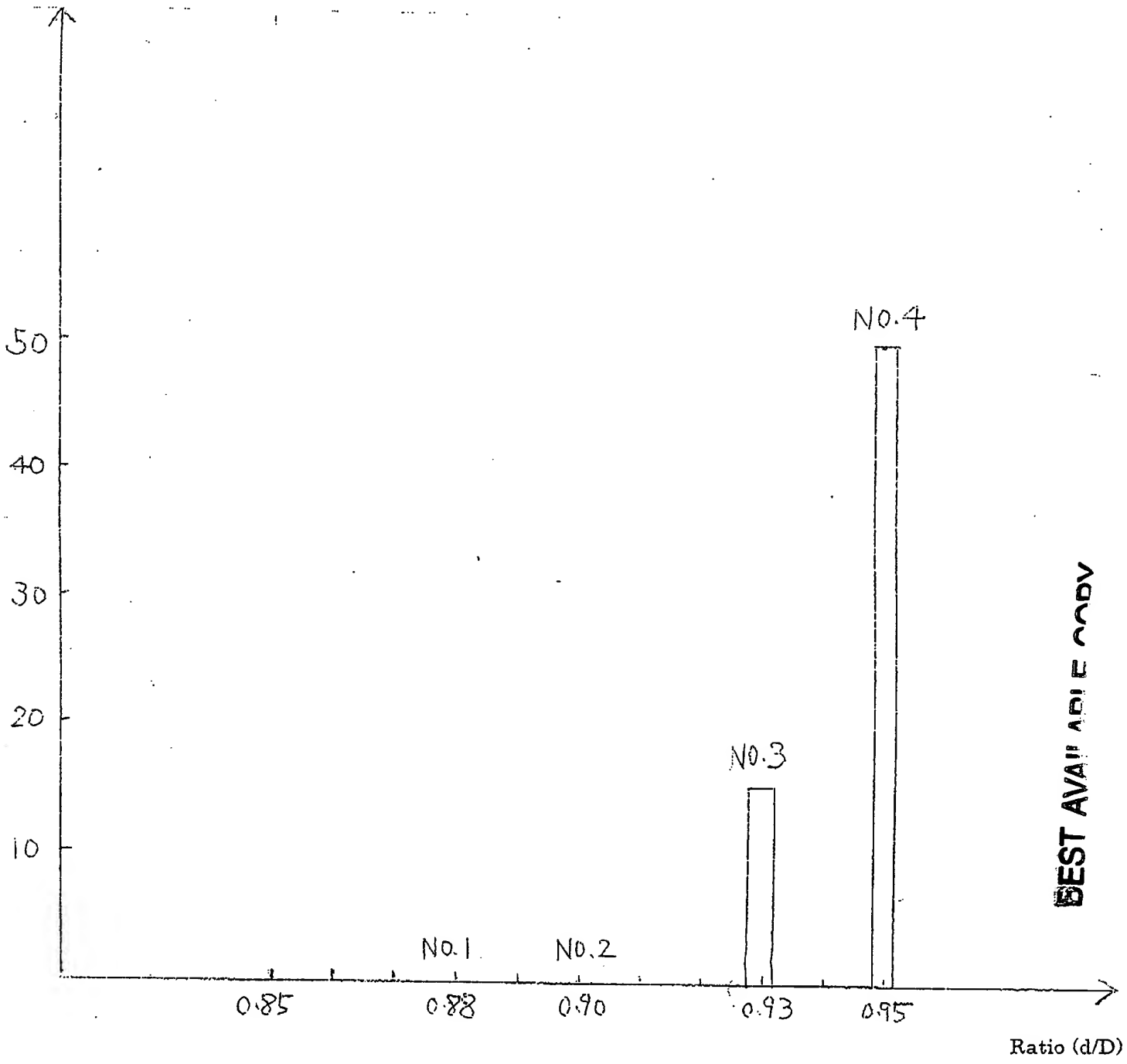
Sean M. McGinn, Esq.
Reg. No. 34, 386

**MCGINN INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW GROUP, PLLC**
8321 Old Courthouse Road, Suite 200
Vienna, VA 22182-3817
(703) 761-4100
**Customer No. 21254**






Graph 1 : Relationship between Eccentricity error and Ratio (d/D)






Graph 2: Relationship between Number of test piece of which surface was damaged and Ratio (d/D)